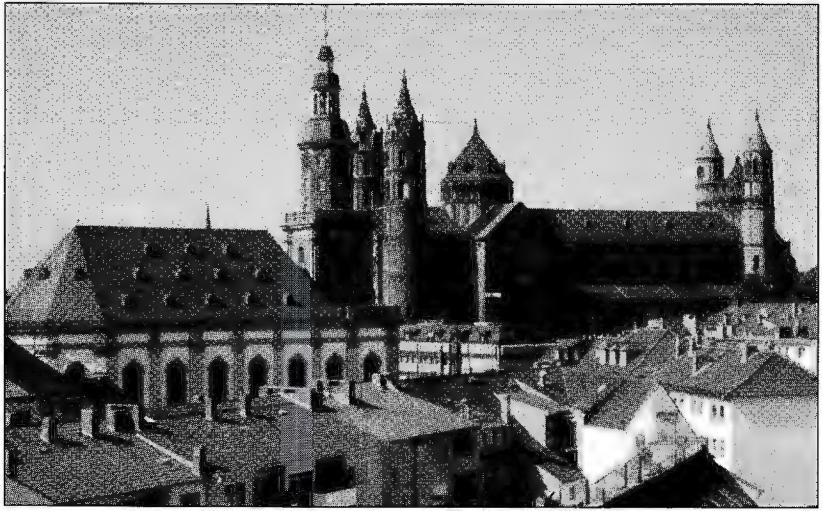


REFORMATION TODAY



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1993

136



The city of Worms in which we see on the left, the Luther Memorial Church and on the right the Roman Catholic Church which stands adjacent to the site of the former palace where Luther made his historic stand before the Emperor Charles V.



**Hier Stehe Ich
Ich Kann Nicht Anders
Gott Hilfe Mir. Amen**

Front cover: Lying at the heart of the momentous 16th Century Reformation was Luther's discovery and experience of Justification by Faith, an experience which changed the whole course of Christendom. The Church of Rome responded with the long drawn out Council of Trent (see article by Robert Godfrey). Calvin in turn responded to Trent with a treatise of superb clarity and biblical authority. The issues are as relevant today as they were then. The gates of the city of Worms, pictured on the front cover, remind us of the time when Luther's faith stood the testing of fiery trial. Many of the original buildings were destroyed in the war but the walled city is beautifully preserved and honour is done to the great Reformer.

Editorial

Present Day Revival

Dr Ron Davies is a tutor at All Nations Bible College, Ware, Hertfordshire. He has kindly agreed to the extraction of the article, *The Beginning of the Revival in Romania* from a manuscript he has prepared for publication. He concludes by pointing us to the present-day situations in Eastern Europe and the CIS and our responsibility to share concern that spiritual awakening will spread to the ends of the earth. He is also author of *I Will Pour Out My Spirit*, Monarch 1992, pp 288, which book provides a well-documented survey of revivals.

The Great Commission

Fulfilling the Great Commission is the title given to the paperback consisting of six valuable historical papers from the 1992 Westminster Conference. (Details may be obtained from Pastor John Harris, 8, Back Knowl Road, Mirfield, W Yorkshire WF14 9SA.) It is not my purpose to review them here but rather refer to the first, *John Calvin and the Spread of the Gospel in France*, by Jean-Marc Berthoud, which takes up 54 of the total 147 pages!

Berthoud begins as follows:

‘It is a common assertion in evangelical circles, as well as in some quarters deeming themselves to be doctrinally reformed, that Calvin’s doctrines of divine sovereignty, human depravity and predestination stifle, in those who hold them, all zeal for the proclamation of the gospel and for that growth of the Kingdom of God we have come to call *Evangelism*. Philip Edgcumbe Hughes put the issue forthrightly in the following terms:

As for Calvin’s theology, we are all familiar with the scornful rationalisation that facetiously asserts that his horrible doctrine of divine election makes nonsense of all missionary and evangelistic activity.

As this paper will seek to show, nothing could be further from the truth. Let us at this point content ourselves with a few summary facts which will, by themselves, amply give the lie to such arbitrary *pseudo-theological* pronouncements, which have as little relation to Calvin’s theology as they do to historical realities. In 1555, the first organised Reformed church in France was established in Paris. Such a congregation, with its consistory of elders, its deacons and its discipline, was established on the model of the Genevan church.’

Berthoud goes on to contrast the numerous unorganised groups which met throughout France for Bible study and prayer – *églises plantées* (planted churches), with the organised congregations – *églises dressées* (established churches), where

faithful teaching, nurturing and church discipline were practised. According to figures given by the Admiral de Coligny to Catherine de Medici, within a short period of seven years no less than 2150 such churches were established in the Kingdom of France.

‘At the end of 1561 Pierre Viret, the great Reformer and ethicist from the canton of Vaud, exiled from Lausanne by the Bernese authorities for insisting on the establishment of a church-controlled discipline, was preaching to 8000 communicants in the town of Nîmes. Though the evangelical faith had been growing sharply in France since the late twenties the years 1555-1562 saw an unprecedented explosion both of conversions to the Reformed faith and of the establishment of formally organised congregations. As the Protestant historian Samuel Mours writes:

There is no doubt that if the scourge of the Wars of Religion had not stricken the country, France would have become predominantly Protestant.

A number of questions arise:

- How is one to account for such an extraordinary revival of Christianity in a land where the defenders of the Christian faith had, for decades, been the objects of ever fiercer persecution?
- What role did Calvin and the city of Geneva play in this extraordinary blossoming of the gospel in France?
- How is one to account for the fact that the preaching of such apparently humanly debilitating doctrines as those of predestination, the total sovereignty of God and the utter depravity of human beings – which too many evangelical Christians today declare to be counter-productive of effective evangelisation – should have in fact produced one of the most spectacular revivals in the history of the Church? For the preaching of the Reformation not only led to the conversion of countless men and women to an extremely demanding faith, but in addition, producing a thoroughgoing transformation of the cultural, social and political mores of great segments of Western civilisation, the likes of which we have not seen since.’

These, and other questions are addressed in his scintillating paper.

The Westminster Conference

Westminster Chapel, London, December 14-15, 1993, will include papers on Samuel Rutherford and John Berridge. The speakers are: Samuel T Logan, Geoffrey Thomas, Simon Chase, Eric Lane, Maurice Roberts and Daniel Webber. Samuel Logan is president of Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia, USA. His subject will be *The Rise and Decline of Puritanism in Sixteenth-Century England*.

Calvin, Trent and Justification

W Robert Godfrey

Justification has long been known among Protestants as the article of faith by which the Church stands or falls. Justification, along with the authority of Scripture and the nature of the Lord's Supper, was at the centre of debates between the Reformers and the Roman Church. Vast amounts of energy and ink were devoted to clarifying and defending the Reformation doctrine of justification. All the great Protestant confessions state the doctrine.

This study will examine the doctrine of justification from the perspective of John Calvin's response to the decisions of the Roman Catholic Council of Trent. This perspective illumines the essential debate between Rome and the Reformers on justification.

Today such a historical reflection is especially needed. It is needed *first* because Christians must continually meditate on and be renewed in the truths of the Saviour's work on their behalf. And *second* they need to be equipped to evaluate new controversies that have arisen in the evangelical community in our time.

A New Debate on Justification

One of the significant debates of our time has come to be known as 'the Lordship controversy'. Can one have Jesus as Saviour and not have him as Lord? Can one be saved without any change in one's life? Must one achieve a certain level of holiness to be saved? Such questions have been intensely debated with Zane Hodges and John MacArthur emerging as principal antagonists in this dispute. *This controversy at root is a new debate on the doctrine of justification.*

How could a major controversy arise on a subject like justification which has been exhaustively studied for centuries and about which there was a clear consensus among evangelical Protestants? Part of the answer is that evangelical Christians have become very ignorant about church history. With what can only be called pride, many have thought that they could dig all of God's truth out of the Bible by themselves. They neglected the treasures of insights into God's Word that have accumulated from the labours of brothers and sisters over the centuries. They have insisted on reinventing the wheel in our generation – and they have not managed to make it round.

A second part of the answer is that many evangelicals have developed a bias against theology and theological systems. They do not want theology; they want

‘the simple gospel’. They believe that systems are artificial and are imposed on the Bible. The Bible is their only creed. But they end up with a system that is implicit, unexamined and sometimes ruthlessly imposed on the Bible. A third part of the answer to how such a controversy could arise comes from the history of evangelical Protestantism. To summarise too briefly, from the seventeenth century on, many evangelicals have seen the greatest threat to true faith coming from formalism. Especially in the state churches of Europe many people called themselves Christians and were willing to sign on the dotted line the formal confession of their church, but their lives showed no effect of the work of the Spirit. Therefore Puritans and Pietists and later revivalists of many sorts focused on the need for greater *life* in the churches. This concern manifested itself in calls for conversion, for holiness, for revival, for decisions. This concern was entirely valid. There was great formalism in the churches. But some of the solutions increased rather than solved the problems.

Some of the solutions tainted the gospel with legalism, implying or teaching that one could be right with God – could be justified – only by acquiring a certain amount of holiness. Such legalism tended to evoke a reaction to the opposite extreme saying holiness was irrelevant to the Christian life. The pendulum swing between *moralism* and *antinomianism* continues to our day. The extremes on either end of the swing are neither theologically correct nor spiritually profitable. Hodges clearly represents an antinomian extreme in the Lordship controversy. MacArthur’s position seems much more balanced although occasionally slipping into moralistic expressions.

The Lordship controversy itself illustrates how theology is intensely practical. What is the gospel message? What are Christians to believe and how are they to live? These questions are not abstract or peripheral, but essential for the Christian.

Calvin on Justification

The teaching of John Calvin on justification is remarkably biblical and balanced. It can give us the truth and stability that will build us up in the faith. The classic reflection of Calvin on the Roman Catholic doctrine adopted at the Council of Trent will illumine the issues on justification that are always before a believer.

When the Reformation began and Luther trumpeted justification by faith alone, the Roman Church was not in a strong position to respond. In the course of the Middle Ages much had been written on justification and a general consensus had emerged on the doctrine, but no comprehensive teaching on justification had officially been adopted by the Church. Very significant differences about justification existed in the Roman Church. Many leaders of the old Church recognised their weakness on this point and urged the calling of an ecumenical council that could rule on justification (as well as on a variety of other issues).

The Council of Trent

This council after many delays finally convened at the city of Trent in 1545. The Council of Trent established a definitive Roman Catholic position on justification.¹ For our purposes we can summarise the key elements of that position in six points:

1. The Christian is justified by grace, but human free will, although weakened by sin, can and must cooperate with grace. (See for example, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Session Six, chapters 1 and 5.) Trent teaches that grace is necessary and even primary in the process of salvation. But human dignity and responsibility require that the *human will also has a role*. Grace enables the will to cooperate, but ultimately the will *must act to make grace effective and saving*. Trent seeks to sound Augustinian in its stress on grace, but actually compromises with Pelagianism in the determinative function that it gives to the human will for salvation. (It is amazing how many evangelicals today share with Trent this understanding of grace.)

2. Faith is defined as a matter of the intellect, combining knowledge and assent to truth. Such faith, known as unformed faith, cannot justify. When faith is linked to love, then it becomes formed faith and does justify. *Faith alone does not justify, but faith and love* (which produce good works) justify. (See *Trent*, Session Six, chapters 8 and 11.) *Trent* is rejecting any idea that 'head knowledge' alone saves. The Christian rather must link intellectual conviction with moral transformation for salvation. Love gives life to faith just as the soul gives life to the body. Faith without love is dead just as the body without the soul is only a corpse. Since God loves only the lovely, we must be morally changed by love in order to be acceptable to God.

Understanding Trent's definition of faith is crucial for any effective communication with knowledgeable Roman Catholics. When evangelicals speak of 'faith alone', the Roman Catholic is likely to hear us saying that we are justified by the intellect alone. We must carefully define what we mean by faith to avoid that misunderstanding.

The tragedy of Hodges' position is that he very nearly defines faith the same way that *Trent* does. He does basically define faith as assent to the truth. The difference between *Trent* and Hodges is that Hodges says that such assent is saving. This means that Hodges is more unbiblical than *Trent*. Hodges certainly misses the historic evangelical understanding of faith.

3. Justification is not solely by the imputation or crediting of Christ's righteousness to the Christian, but by the infusing of Christ's righteousness into the Christian so that he actually becomes righteous. (See *Trent*, Session Six, chapters 7 and 16.) This point follows necessarily from Trent's discussion of faith. If the Christian must be morally transformed to be saved, then it is not enough for the righteousness of Christ to be counted as his. *The righteousness of Christ must actually live in him and change him so that he can be justified*. Luther's idea of an 'alien

righteousness' is useless. The Christian needs a morally renewing righteousness. That righteousness flows into him especially through the sacraments.

4. Justification finally rests on the Christian's acquiring and maintaining a certain level of sanctification. (See *Trent*, Session Six, chapter 7.) For *Trent*, grace is seen in rather quantitative terms. *One needs a certain amount of grace to be acceptable.* The moral transformation must reach a certain level. Certainly no mortal sins can be allowed to remain unconfessed and unforgiven or salvation is impossible.

5. *The Christian can fulfil the commands of God.* (See *Trent*, Session Six, chapter 11.) Again moral responsibility and human dignity require the freedom and ability to obey all the commands of God – at least as a theoretical possibility.

6. The Christian cannot be certain, except by special revelation, that he is presently in a state of grace, or that he is elect, or that he will finally persevere and be saved. (See *Trent*, Session Six, chapters 9, 12 and 13.) Since sanctification is necessary for justification and the whole life of the Christian is in process, *the Christian can have no assurance of salvation in this life.* *Trent* goes even further, however, and says that *such assurance would not be spiritually profitable.* Such assurance produces spiritual pride and moral indifference. A measure of insecurity produces humility, piety, carefulness and hard work.

Again at this point evangelicals hoping to communicate effectively with knowledgeable Roman Catholics need to understand that we must not assume that everyone wants and is looking for assurance of salvation. *Trent* sees our assurance as arrogance. For Roman Catholics the assurance taught by Hodges that if we once believe we will be saved, no matter how immoral our lives become, seems to prove their worst fears.

Antidote to Council of Trent

In 1547 Calvin responded to *Trent* on justification in a work entitled *Acts of the Council of Trent with the Antidote.*² Calvin analyses and refutes the positions of *Trent* chapter by chapter. With careful theological reflection and scriptural evidence, he dismantles the Roman doctrine and states his own. Let us look at the kind of alternatives that Calvin offered to the basic points of *Trent*:

1. Calvin begins with the matter of grace in relation to justification. He acknowledges that man after the fall has a will, but insists that that will is dead in sin. The will can make decisions and take actions, but it is not free to cooperate with the grace of God. The will is so twisted and corrupted – what later Calvinism calls total depravity – *that it has no ability or desire to choose for God or for salvation.* The will is in rebellion against God. The only hope for man and his will is in God's regenerating grace. God's sovereign and irresistible grace makes man willing.

Anything good found in the human will is not earned by cooperation, but is a gift of grace. 'The whole may be thus summed up – Their error consists in sharing the work between God and ourselves, so as to transfer to ourselves the obedience of a pious will in assenting to divine grace, whereas this is the proper work of God himself.'³

Calvin especially appeals to Augustine and shows that Augustine on grace stands against *Trent* and with the Reformers. Calvin wants to demonstrate that Rome's claim to antiquity for its teachings is false. The Reformers have not produced a theological novelty, but stand with the Bible and the best tradition of the Church.

2. Faith is a crucial topic for Calvin. He rejects the Roman distinction between formed and unformed faith. Calvin denies that true biblical faith is ever just a matter of the intellect. Faith is not just knowledge and assent for Calvin. It is also trust. Faith justifies as it *trusts* the promises of God and rests in the righteousness of Christ. The true believer is not one who simply accumulates truths in his head, but one who relies upon Jesus. 'Faith brings nothing of our own to God, but receives what God spontaneously offers us. Hence it is that faith, however imperfect, nevertheless possesses a perfect righteousness, because it has respect to nothing but the gratuitous goodness of God.'⁴ True faith, however small or weak, trusts Christ and so is the instrument that connects us to Christ and the fullness of his blessings. It is not imperfect faith that justifies, but the object of faith, the perfect righteousness of Christ, justifies.

Calvin insists that true faith is living and fruitful. It certainly *produces* a Christian life of love and good works, but *the love and good works are no part of justification. Faith alone justifies, but true faith is never alone in the justified.*

3. Calvin wants to be absolutely clear about faith so that a *proper distinction between imputation and infusion can be maintained*. Christ's perfect righteousness is imputed or reckoned to us as the basis of our justification. Faith looks outside itself to Christ and his work as the only hope and strength. 'But when they say that a man is justified, when he is again formed for the obedience of God, they subvert the whole argument of Paul . . . (Rom 4:14) . . . so long as we look at what we are in ourselves, we must tremble in the sight of God, so far from having a firm and unshaken confidence of eternal life.'⁵

Calvin believes that Christ does infuse his grace to change and sanctify the Christian. The Spirit does morally transform Christians. But *that infusion or transformation has no part in justification*. Calvin follows the Scripture in seeing that only perfection is acceptable to God: 'Be holy because I am holy' (Lev 11:44; I Pet 1:16). *Only a perfect righteousness can stand in the judgment and the Christian can have such righteousness only outside himself and in the perfection of Christ*. The most holy Christian who ever lived was not perfectly holy. Only Jesus met that

standard. And the perfection of Jesus' righteousness reaches us untainted only as it is *imputed to us and received by faith*.

4. A key error of Rome is to confuse justification and sanctification. Calvin writes,

. . . Justification and Sanctification are constantly conjoined and cohere; but from this it is erroneously inferred that they are one and the same. For example: The light of the sun, though never unaccompanied with heat, is not to be considered heat. . . . We acknowledge, then, that as soon as any one is justified, renewal also necessarily follows: and there is no dispute as to whether or not Christ sanctifies all whom he justifies. It were to rend the gospel, and divide Christ himself to attempt to separate the righteousness which we obtain by faith [justification] from repentance [sanctification].⁶

Calvin teaches that justification and sanctification must be distinguished or one slips into the moralism or legalism of Rome. At the same time he insists that they cannot be separated or one slips into antinomianism. *Justification is not sanctification, but sanctification always follows justification.*

Calvin captures the biblical balance here beautifully. James 2 shows that real faith produces works and where works are absent faith is not real. The Great Commission shows the same thing. Jesus sent his disciples to make disciples, that is, followers who are justified and sanctified. The apostles in the *Book of Acts* preach both faith (justification) and repentance (sanctification) as the whole message from God. Hodges' distinction of 'believers' who are saved, but not sanctified, from disciples who are saved and sanctified is completely without biblical basis. The one Jesus is justifier and sanctifier; he is Saviour and Lord. *The Westminster Larger Catechism* (Question 77) exactly captures Calvin's thought:

Wherein do justification and sanctification differ?

Although sanctification be inseparably joined with justification, yet they differ, in that God in justification imputeth the righteousness of Christ; in sanctification his Spirit infuseth grace, and enableth to the exercise thereof; in the former, sin is pardoned; in the other, it is subdued; the one doth equally free all believers from the revenging wrath of God, and that perfectly in this life, that they never fall into condemnation; the other is neither equal in all, nor in this life perfect in any, but growing up to perfection.

5. No one can keep any of the commands of God perfectly. All our best efforts are marred with sin. Calvin writes:

It is too plain, however, that we are never animated and actuated by a perfect love to God in obeying his just commands. . . . In short, the seventh chapter of

the Romans disposes of this controversy. There Paul, in his own person and that of all the godly, confesses that he is far from perfection, even when his will is at its best.⁷

The sinfulness of the best Christians makes it clear why only the perfect righteousness of Christ, received by faith alone, can justify.

The reality of our imperfection does not imply that we can be content with our sin. Rather it places clearly before us our agenda and goals. The Christian life is a constant war with sin and desire to see more and more of the holiness of Christ manifested in us.

6. Certainty is an important theme for Calvin. Faith in Christ brings a certainty of sonship to the Christian. Faith brings joy and assurance that we are right with God. The Christian can and must be certain that he is in a state of grace. Calvin insists that there is no virtue in doubt. The many and glorious promises of Jesus should produce great confidence. Because by faith we possess the perfect righteousness of Christ, we can have real assurance. Calvin writes:

Where then is that boldness of which Paul elsewhere speaks (Eph 3:12), that access with confidence to the Father though faith in Christ? Not contented with the term confidence, he furnishes us with boldness, which is certainly something more than certainty. And what shall we say to his own occasional use of the term certainty (Rom 8:37)? This certainty he founds upon nothing but a mere persuasion of the free love of God.⁸

Calvin also insists that the Christian can be certain of his election:

I acknowledge, indeed, and we are all careful to teach, that nothing is more pernicious than to inquire into the secret council of God, with the view of thereby obtaining a knowledge of our election – that this is a whirlpool in which we shall be swallowed up and lost. But seeing that our Heavenly Father holds forth in Christ a mirror of our eternal adoption, no man truly holds what has been given us by Christ save he who feels assured that Christ himself has been given him by the Father, that he may not perish.⁹

And Calvin also argues a certainty of perseverance:

For certainly, he whose expectation of eternal life is not founded on absolute certainty, must be agitated by various doubts. This is not the kind of hope which Paul describes, when he says that he is certainly persuaded that neither life, nor death, or things present, nor things to come, will dissolve the love with which God embraces him in Christ. He would not speak thus did not the certainty of Christian hope reach beyond the last hour of life.¹⁰

Calvin believes that the Scriptures encourage a true Christian to certainty because of the rich promises of Jesus. Fear, doubt and temptation must be resisted with trust

and confidence in God. Rather than promoting moral indifference and spiritual laxity, assurance gives us the confidence and strength to love God and pursue holiness.

Conclusion

Calvin's response to *Trent* is so valuable that it should be read in its entirety. This brief summary should encourage us, however, to keep the doctrine of justification clear in our minds and central to our Christian life. Spiritual balance and power flow from this doctrine when it is rightly understood and rightly related to other elements of Christian truth.

In our day when the Church is so weak and confused in many ways, we must not be led astray into thinking that either moralism or antinomianism will help us. Moralism destroys the glorious liberty we have through the work of Christ. It draws attention away from Christ and his grace. Antinomianism misses the call to holiness in Scripture and reinforces the serious erosion of morality in our society generally and in our churches. The work of Christ and the holiness of God are at stake in understanding justification properly. Meditating on justification will draw us closer to Christ 'who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption' (1 Cor 1:30).

This article first appeared in 'The Outlook', 2201 Oak Industrial Drive NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505, USA. The material forms a chapter in a forthcoming book, CHRIST THE LORD, edited by Michael Horton, published by Baker Book House.)

Footnotes

- 1 For the complete text of Trent's decisions, see 'The Canons and Dogmatic Decrees of the Council of Trent' in Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1977, vol 2, pp77-206.
- 2 Printed in *Selected Works of John Calvin, Tracts and Letters*, edited by H Beveridge and J Bonnet, vol 3, Baker, Grand Rapids, 1983.
- 3 *Ibid*, p113.
- 4 *Ibid*, p125.
- 5 *Ibid*, p115.
- 6 *Ibid*, p116.
- 7 *Ibid*, p134.
- 8 *Ibid*, p125.
- 9 *Ibid*, p135.
- 10 *Ibid*, p136.

The Evangelistic Preaching of Dr D Martyn Lloyd-Jones

By Dr Cary Kimbrell, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA. The article is an abridgement of a paper submitted as part of his doctoral thesis to the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. The full paper is thoroughly documented but references have only been inserted here for the main quotes.



Cary Kimbrell

In following this subject I will first give a biographical sketch, then look at Dr Lloyd-Jones' view of preaching and finally get to grips with his view of evangelistic preaching.

Biographical Sketch

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones was born on December 20, 1899. His parents were Henry and Magdalene Lloyd-Jones. The place of his birth was Donald Street, Cardiff, South Wales.

When Martyn was five his parents and two brothers Harold and Vincent moved to Llangeitho, Cardiganshire, Wales. There Henry Lloyd-Jones operated a general store. Later in life, Martyn stated his father was, 'the best natural man I've ever known and the kindest character I've ever met'. According to Murray, 'Henry Lloyd-Jones showed great wisdom in bringing up the boys.'

After examinations in 1916, it was reported in a Welsh newspaper: 'David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, at the London University Senior School examination, passed in seven subjects and gained distinction in five.' These scores made it possible for Lloyd-Jones to gain a place for medical training in St Bartholomew's Hospital in London where Lord Thomas Horder, renowned heart specialist and physician to the Royal family, appointed him as his junior house physician.

Martyn was converted in 1924 after he completed his studies and became a doctor. On January 8, 1927, he married Bethan Ann Phillips. She was also a doctor. They had two children, Elizabeth born in 1927 and Ann born in 1937.

Dr Lloyd-Jones surrendered to the call to preach in 1926. This occurred only after great internal struggle. Throughout his long ministry he only served as pastor of two churches. His first church was Bethlehem Forward Movement Church in Sandfields, Aberavon, South Wales. He became pastor there in 1927 and resigned in 1938 because of physical exhaustion. When Lloyd-Jones became pastor the church had 93 members. In 1930 the church began to experience a visitation of the Spirit. In that year alone 135 people were added to the church fellowship, 128 from the outside. By 1938 the church had grown to 530 members and approximately 850 regular attenders at the worship services.

The second church was Westminster Chapel, a Congregational church in the heart of London, just a hundred yards from Buckingham Palace. He became associate to G Campbell Morgan in 1939. Morgan was impressed with Lloyd-Jones and chose him to be his successor because of his high regard for the place of the Scriptures. After Morgan's retirement in 1943 Lloyd-Jones became the sole pastor. At that time the membership had decreased to 150 because of the war. When Dr Lloyd-Jones retired in 1968, the congregation was about ten times that number.

After retirement aged 69, the doctor maintained an extensive itinerant ministry. He also attended to his written ministry which included many volumes on Romans and Ephesians. Much of his later life was spent helping young ministers. He was always affectionately referred to as 'the doctor'. He died at his home on Sunday, March 1 1981. Three thousand people attended the memorial service at Westminster Chapel. Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones is acknowledged as the greatest preacher in Britain this century.

His View of Preaching

Dr Lloyd-Jones felt incapable of expounding on preaching in spite of the fact that he delivered a series of lectures to the students of Westminster Seminary which were the substance of *Preaching and Preachers* (Hodders), one of the first books on the subject. He said, 'There is a mysterious element in preaching that makes it impossible to speak about,' and described preaching as 'a transaction between the preacher and the listener' (*Preaching and Preachers* p53). Three components are involved in the doctor's definition of preaching: the message, the messenger and the one who receives the message. Preaching is not a preacher's performance. It is, in the words of Dr Lloyd-Jones, 'That which deals with the total person, the hearer becomes involved and knows that he has been dealt with and addressed by God and through this preacher.'

In preaching something is happening between the man who is speaking and the congregation that is listening. The doctor agreed with the maxim that preaching is 'truth mediated through personality'. The whole man, he contended, is involved in preaching and the congregation makes contributions.

Both [preacher and congregation] blend together and they become a unity. There is a transaction backward and forward. That is true preaching... One cannot listen to true preaching in detachment. There is an element of control and compulsion in preaching. The congregation is gripped and fixed. If this isn't happening, there is no true preaching. (*What is preaching?* - Mount Olive Tape Library, Mount Olive, Mississippi).

Of the three components: the message, the messenger and the one who receives the message, two relate directly to the preacher himself. They are the message and the messenger. Here the doctor draws a distinction: 'There is first of all the sermon or message – the content of that which is being delivered. But secondly, there is the act of preaching, the delivery, if you like, or what is commonly called preaching.'

In Dr Lloyd-Jones' opinion, one 'can have good preaching even with a poor sermon; it is a real possibility'. He gave an illustration of this point:

I remember reading a statement by a great preacher of the end of the eighteenth century in Wales. He was drawing a distinction between the two greatest evangelical preachers of that century. One was George Whitefield... The other was a preacher in Wales called Daniel Rowland... This man to whom I am referring, David Jones... was being asked to evaluate the difference between Whitefield and Daniel Rowland as preachers. In his reply he said, 'As regards the oratory, as regards the delivery, as regards the act of preaching, as regards the soaring to the heights and lifting up of the congregation to the heavens I really could detect very little difference between them... The one big difference between them was this, that you could always be certain of getting a good sermon from Rowland, but not always from Whitefield' (*Preaching and Preachers* pp57-58).

For the doctor, the sermon logically divided into two parts, the content and the form. The content referred to the message. The form referred to the characteristics of arranging the message into a presentation. The message was not to consist of merely topical comments, such as: the events of the week; nor moral essays; nor psychological treatments; nor speculative thought, philosophy and playing with ideas, trying to meet the modern man on his own level. He declared, 'Our business is not to discover the message, but to interpret and proclaim it.'

Dr Lloyd-Jones believed the message was revealed to the preacher. After quoting the Apostle Paul, 'I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you,' he added, 'That is what determines the message or sermon as such; it is that which the preacher has received.' The preacher is an ambassador, not one who voices his own thought, or opinions, or desires, but who speaks the message of his Sovereign. He is the bearer of a message he has been commissioned to bring.

He declared that the message must be divided into two main sections. First, the message of salvation, the *kerygma* (Greek – usually translated proclamation), that

is what determines evangelistic preaching. Second, the teaching aspect, the *didache*, that which builds up those who have already believed - the edification of the saints.

The doctor believed the perfect summary of *kerygma* was 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10:

They themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead - Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Evangelistic preaching starts with God. It is a declaration concerning God's being, power and glory. This in turn leads to the preaching of the Law. The character of God leads to the Law of God. All this is designed to bring people to a conviction of sin and to lead them to repentance. This in turn should lead them to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the one and only Saviour. That, in the opinion of the doctor, 'is the message of salvation, that is what is called evangelistic preaching... This should take place at least once a week'.

Didache is preaching that builds up those who already believe. Dr Lloyd-Jones divided this type of preaching into two sections, the first which is purely experimental and the second which is instructional. He wrote; 'There is the preaching which is instructional teaching, but mainly experimental. That I generally did on a Sunday morning. There is a more purely instructional type of preaching which I personally did on a week-night.'

To sum up, the doctor presented three types of sermons: evangelistic, experimental and instructional. He emphasised that these distinctions should not be pressed absolutely, but they were general guidance to the preacher in his preparation of the message. He wrote;

It is good to think of it [preaching] in that three-fold way - preaching to those who are unbelievers, then preaching to a believer in an experimental manner, and, thirdly, in a more directly didactic instructional manner (*Preaching and Preachers* p63).

His View of Evangelistic Preaching

The doctor understood evangelistic preaching to be the message of salvation, the *kerygma*. The other types of preaching were *didactic*. Therefore, it was evident he drew a distinction between evangelistic preaching and other preaching. He wrote; 'Preaching which is nothing but evangelistic is obviously inadequate. Preaching, on the other hand, which is never evangelistic is equally inadequate.'

Evangelistic preaching was distinguished from instructional preaching by its message. The specific message of salvation comprised evangelistic preaching. It is a

theological presentation of the gospel. In fact, he believed evangelistic preaching should be more theological than any other type. This theological element was essential to evangelistic preaching. The doctor maintained:

I would be prepared to argue that in many ways evangelistic preaching should be more, rather than less, theological than any other, and for this good reason. Why is it that you call people to repent? Why do you call them to believe the gospel? You cannot deal properly with repentance without dealing with the doctrine of man, the doctrine of the fall, the doctrine of sin and the wrath of God against sin. Then you call men to come to Christ and to give themselves to him. How can you do so without knowing who he is and on what grounds you invite them to come to him, and so on? In other words it is all highly theological. Evangelism which is not theological is not evangelism at all in any true sense. It may be calling for decisions, it may be calling on people to come to religion, or to live a better kind of life, or the offering of some kind of psychological benefits; but it cannot by any definition be regarded as Christian evangelism, because there is no true reason for what you are doing apart from these great principles (*Preaching and Preachers* p65).

Dr Lloyd-Jones also felt that this preaching was first and foremost presented to the mind. He thought it was wrong to appeal directly to the will or emotions. He wrote, 'The moment we depart from this order and this rule, and make these direct approaches to either of the other elements [emotion or will] we are asking for trouble and we are likely to get it. The mind was appealed to through propositional truth in logical presentation. In order for preaching to be truly evangelistic it must have this element.'

This is not to say that he thought no emotions were involved. That was clear in his presentation concerning the act of preaching. Here he spoke of excessive pressure on the emotions, or will. He feared this could lead to a created response saying, 'I argue that too much pressure on the will - there is inevitably an element of this in all preaching, but I say too much pressure - or too direct pressure, is dangerous, because in the end it may produce a condition in which what has determined the response of the man who 'comes forward' is not so much *truth* itself, as perhaps, the personality of the evangelist, or some vague general fear, or some other kind of psychological influence.'

The doctor gave ten reasons why he did not call for decisions:

- 1 It is wrong to make a direct attack upon the emotions.
- 2 Too much pressure on the will may produce a response based on something other than the truth.
- 3 The preaching of the Word and the call for decisions should not be separated.

- 4 This method carries with it the idea that sinners have an inherent power of decision and of self-conversion which is contrary to the Scripture and reality.
- 5 There is an implication here that the evangelist somehow is in a position to manipulate the Holy Spirit.
- 6 It produces a superficial conviction of sin.
- 7 You are encouraging people to think their act of going forward somehow saves them.
- 8 It is based ultimately on a distrust of the Holy Spirit, his power and his work.
- 9 It promotes a wrong understanding of regeneration.
- 10 No sinner ever really decides for Christ (see point 4).

(Preaching and Preachers pp271-280.)

He thought the greatest essential in preaching was an unction, an anointing of the Holy Spirit. He said, 'Whenever a man is filled with the Spirit he always becomes an evangelist.' (*'Evangelism'* - Mount Olive Tape Library, Mississippi.) This great dependence upon the unction of the Holy Spirit perhaps distinguished Dr Lloyd-Jones from many of his contemporaries. It greatly affected his methodology.

The doctor's Calvinistic theology was manifested clearly at this point. In the above sermon he said, 'He [the Calvinist] looks for the given. He believes in revival. The Arminian believes in evangelistic campaigns not revivals. The Calvinist is more dependent on the Spirit for results.' He goes on to assert that the Arminian doctrine of the Spirit was that, 'you got all the Spirit you would ever get at the moment of your regeneration'. This he contrasted with the Calvinistic doctrine of the Spirit, which was that the Spirit could be poured out again and again. This was how Christianity began, the indument with power and this is what God has been repeating throughout the centuries. 'The Calvinist is the man who looks for the power of God.' Therefore, to the Calvinist, evangelism was a natural response, an inevitability from within, because of this unction.

The Substance of Evangelistic Preaching

Dr Lloyd-Jones understood the gospel essentially as good news. Yet, the introduction to this news contained serious news. He divided the introduction into three areas: The true and living God, his wrath upon sin, and the terrible plight of the whole of mankind face to face with this God.

The True and Living God

The doctor believed the gospel started with God. The gospel did not start with man or even the Lord Jesus Christ. It started with God the Father. He wrote, ‘The first and greatest truth concerning salvation is that it is a revelation of the glory of God - “to the praise of the glory of his grace” (Eph 1:6) - or if you like - “to the praise of his glory as it is manifested by himself in and through his grace”’ (God’s Ultimate Purpose: *An Exposition of Ephesians One*, Baker 1984, pp129-130).

Again he wrote: ‘With these two words [but God...] we come to the introduction of the Christian message, the peculiar, specific message which the Christian faith has to offer to us’ (*God’s Way of Reconciliation: Studies in Ephesians Two*, Baker 1980, p59). ‘We must not go on to consider what the Son has done, what the Holy Spirit has done and still does, until we are absolutely clear about the primacy of the Father, and the origin of it all in the Father himself’ (*Romans: An Exposition of Chapter One*, Zondervan 1985, p62).

The Wrath of God on Sin

After the primacy of God the Father was established, the doctor stressed the responsibility of man concerning his purpose in life. The preacher must stress, he contended, the creatureliness of man and how this leaves him responsible to the God who created him (*‘How to Communicate the Gospel’* - Mount Olive Tape Library, Mississippi). He said, ‘You are creatures of God, responsible to him and you are going to stand before him in judgment.’ There is urgency because ‘the wrath of God is upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness’. Men must be shown their position before God. This idea of wrath was unquestioned in the doctor’s understanding. He maintained that it was not a matter of opinion or argument; it is a fact. He wrote;

It [the wrath of God] has been revealed. It matters not at all what men may think or say or decide. In our cleverness, we make our own gods, or we take out of God everything that is hateful or repugnant to our natural minds, and fondly imagine that therefore all is well... The wrath is as vital and integral a part of the revelation as the love..., that is the very nerve of Paul’s argument at this point. It is because the wrath of God against sin has already been revealed that he is so proud of the gospel which is the revelation of God’s way of salvation (*The Plight of Man and the Power of God*, Baker, 1983 pp66-67).

The Plight of Man

This feature of the message is inextricably woven into the aspect of God’s wrath. The emphasis in this section was man’s inability to do anything about his plight. He is totally without the power to correct this situation. He is left dependent on the mercy of God for relief. This was the point to which the doctor hoped the intro-

duction would bring his unbelieving listeners, for only then, in his opinion would they believe. He said,

A man only comes to Christ when he is desperate. A man only comes to Christ when he is alarmed. A man only comes to Christ when he realises the wrath of God and eternal perdition and that he himself is advancing in that direction. They that are whole have no need of a physician, only those who are sick (*'The Message of the Preacher'* - Mount Olive Tape Library, Mississippi).

Conclusion

With regard to the preparation for the act of preaching, the preacher must prepare himself. Dr Lloyd-Jones listed twelve elements vital for authentic preaching: realisation of what is happening; the whole personality of the preacher must be involved; authority; freedom; the preacher must derive something from his congregation; seriousness; liveliness; zeal; warmth; urgency; pathos; and power, or reliance on the Spirit.

Modern evangelistic preaching would be improved if it had in it many of the elements Dr Lloyd-Jones presented. Not only through the remarkable visitations of the Holy Spirit in his first pastorate, but throughout his preaching ministry, there followed many conversions. More than any other British preacher this century his preaching drew crowds of hearers which year after year filled auditoriums throughout the United Kingdom. To modern-day thinking there would be nothing in the doctor's approach that would attract crowds, yet he had crowds; nothing in his approach that would calculate success, yet he had success. Perhaps this can be explained by the power of God of which Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones so eloquently spoke.

The thrust of Lloyd-Jones' sermons is always to show man small and God great. . . . Application has been going on throughout the sermon; in one sense, it has all been application. He will have searched us, analysed us to ourselves, diagnosed us into self-despair, shown up sin and weakness and failure in vivid forms. Now, in conclusion, he points us to the God of all grace. With intense compassion he urges us to cast ourselves on the mercy of God in Christ, and his last words are likely to be an assurance about the life and glory we shall find when we do. Thus the preacher slips out of the picture and leaves us with the God whom he would have us know.

J I Packer quoted in Iain H Murray *D Martyn Lloyd-Jones The Fight of Faith*, Banner of Truth, 1990, pp. 325-326.

The Beginning of the Revival in Romania

Ron Davies

It is generally agreed that the Church in Britain needs 'Revival'. But what is it, and where can we see examples of it? There are no examples close at hand for us to see a revival in progress. Most revivals seem a long way away in space or time, either in China, Indonesia or other places far away, or a long time ago in history, for example the eighteenth-century Revival or the Welsh Revival of 1904.

However, there are two places in Eastern Europe where revivals are in progress at present, namely Romania and Bulgaria. In Romania the Revival began in 1974 during the worst years of repression under Ceausescu and still continues. In Bulgaria it is more recent in origin, although even here there were the beginnings even before the overthrow of the Communist government.

News from Bulgaria is exciting and startling growth is reported among Baptist and Pentecostal churches. Also there are a large number of new independent charismatic churches being started; a spiritual awakening is also beginning among gypsies. This is not mere hearsay, it is possible to document the claims.

The Revival in Romania began in the town of Oradea in Western Transylvania and continues to radiate from there to many places.

Persecution and Oppression

How did the Romanian Revival start? What was the state of the church and the country when it began? What kind of people did God use? What problems arose? How were they dealt with? What did the authorities think about it and how did they try to stop it? How were the results of the Revival preserved and how were the new energies channelled? What difference has the overthrow of the Ceausescu régime made? What are the prospects for the further growth and development of the Revival?

Life in socialist Romania was terrible. Under one of the most tyrannical régimes in Europe, food and energy shortages meant that many starved or froze to death, orphans in the filthy state orphanages were given transfusions of polluted blood to keep them from dying from starvation or cold, all dissent was suppressed. One in ten of the population was in the pay of the dreaded *Securitate*¹, every telephone in the country was 'bugged', people who tried to escape across the borders were shot – and the churches were the special targets of the state system of repression and terror.

For thirty-five years, from 1954 until Ceausescu was overthrown in December 1989, the state subjected Christians to a systematic campaign which was intended to intimidate, weaken and ultimately destroy the life and witness of the Church. The first laws restricting the freedom of the churches were passed in 1948 when the Uniate Church was outlawed and its property given to the Romanian Orthodox Church. However, the systematic pressure on all the churches began in the 1950s. In 1954 the Ministry of Cults issued the Regularisation of Religious Services, which was aimed at the complete control of the churches by the state. For the next five years the pressure was applied increasingly, until by 1959 full control had been achieved and virtually all dissent suppressed. As economic and social conditions became worse and people became more and more dissatisfied, the attacks on the churches increased. The authorities realised that Christianity offered the only alternative view of life to Communist ideology and they were determined that the voice of the Church should be silenced.²

The official strategy was well thought-out. The authorities focused a lot of their attention on the leaders of the different denominations. Existing leaders were manipulated by bribery or threats, or were replaced by those who were more compliant or amenable. Priests and pastors of local churches were restricted in what they were allowed to do, and their preaching licences were withdrawn on the smallest pretext. Those who survived these attacks were further harassed by threats, smear tactics, physical assaults and anything which would discourage them and hinder their effectiveness. Many were imprisoned or forced to leave the country. Of those who remained, all were 'encouraged' to inform on the members of their congregations and an unknown number gave in to such pressure and became informers for the *Securitate*.

Ordinary believers were the objects of discrimination in education and job opportunities, indoctrination, threats of imprisonment and other forms of pressure. Many deacons and church members were also pressurised to inform on their pastors and fellow members. The churches were infiltrated by members of the *Securitate*.

Many of the measures restricting church activity were put into operation by the denominational leaders, who were forced to implement the orders of the Department of Cults. Most of the orders were unwritten, so that it would appear that they were decisions of the denomination, rather than those of the government.³

The way the Romanian Baptist churches fared is a good example of what happened to all Christian groups.⁴ Of the 1,196 Baptist churches and preaching stations, 532 were closed as 'unnecessary'. Of the 952 pastors, 787 lost their licences for 'irregularities'. Many of those who survived did so at the cost of their integrity. Only a few students were permitted to study in the seminary in Bucharest, usually less than ten.⁵ Pastors were only permitted to preach in their own churches; they were not allowed to accept invitations to preach in other congregations. No evangelism, no children's work, no youth work, no special meetings for men or women, no charity work with church funds was permitted. Lists of church officers and

potential officers had to be officially approved, as did lists of baptismal candidates. Only children of Baptist parents could be baptised; all other baptisms were looked on as 'proselytising' of Orthodox members, which was illegal. (In this one regard, the Orthodox views were accepted, and used, by the state authorities.)

During this period, many of the finest pastors lost their licences and many left the country. The churches suffered stagnation and decline. There were few baptisms, and even children of Baptist parents refused to be baptised and left the churches, because of the potential victimisation they would suffer if they identified themselves as believers. Josef Tson has spoken of 'a lost generation', a fifteen year age gap in the churches, as the result of the oppression of those years. In some cases pastors ignored the rules and baptised new converts surreptitiously, under cover of darkness. These were dubbed 'black baptisms'. In most cases, however, it seems that the churches accepted the restrictions, and sought to hold on and try to survive.

In the late 1950s large numbers of believers, including many pastors and lay leaders, were arrested and imprisoned, most of them being charged with 'anti-state conspiracy'. Many of them were tortured or ill-treated. They were released in 1964 as part of a general amnesty for 'political' prisoners, when over 12,000 were freed. While in prison, they had learned many precious lessons concerning the Lord's presence and power, but also concerning their fellow-believers from other denominations. Before, they had kept aloof from such people; now they realised that they were their true brothers in Christ. One survivor, whenever he referred to his prison experience, spoke of his time in God's 'Academy' where he learnt more about the Lord than at any other time in his life.

Into this desperate situation, God brought revival. How did he do it, and whom did he use?

The Origin of the Revival in 1974

Prayer is an essential part of the preparation for revival and, for three years before the Revival began, a small number of men were meeting together regularly to pray about the desperate situation of the Church in Romania. One of them was a young pastor named Vasile Talos who had been influenced by the testimony of young people in the church at Jibau and was converted while doing military training in 1964 at the age of 20. He was baptised in 1965 and began to preach. In the autumn of the same year, he was accepted as one of the few students who were allowed to study in the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest and graduated in 1969 and was appointed as pastor of the Holy Trinity Baptist Church, one of the few churches that the authorities had allowed to stay open in the capital, which had around 350 to 400 members.

From the start, Vasile Talos found that a firm stand for the Lord involved difficulty and opposition. He was severely harassed and forced to report to the *Securitate*

every Monday and explain why he was preaching as he was. In 1971 he began to meet for prayer each Monday with Josef Sarac, and in 1972 invited Josef Tson, newly returned from study in England, to join them. In the Spring of 1973, they issued a more general invitation to all the pastors in Bucharest and district, but only Vasile Brinzei, the pastor of the Golgotha Church in Bucharest, and Pascu Gabau from Alexandria, joined them.

According to Vasile, the prayer meeting attended by these five men was the secret of all the amazing events that followed in the succeeding months and years. They began each session with a time of Bible study, then prayed together for various needs and concluded by discussing the situation of the Church in Romania and what could be done. As they prayed together and pledged mutual support, especially to care for the family of any of their number who might be imprisoned by the authorities, they became free from fear, and they prayed that others might experience the same release. They began to go against some of the restrictions which had been imposed on the churches, including the baptism of outsiders who came to faith in Christ. Vasile Talos baptised between forty and fifty without permission.

After eight months, Vasile Brinzei suggested to Josef Tson that he should produce a paper which would make the point to all believers, especially the Baptists in Romania, that 'we must obey God rather than men' (Acts 5:20). News of the prayer meeting being held in Bucharest began to filter out into the Baptist, Brethren and Pentecostal churches elsewhere in Romania and other pastors began to follow suit.

In the 1950s Josef Tson had been a pastor in Arad in Transylvania. He had worked himself to a standstill, had become disillusioned and had spent ten years in a spiritual wilderness away from any Christian involvement. Following his restoration he constantly emphasised in his preaching the twin themes of the victory of the Lamb of God through suffering and the mercy of God to the greatest sinners. Quite amazingly, in 1969 he had been allowed to leave the country for three years to study in England at Regent's Park Baptist College in Oxford. During his time in England he had been able to see more clearly what the state was trying to do to the churches and how the churches were going along with this and so contributing to their own destruction.

In response to Vasile Brinzei's suggestion, he wrote a paper entitled *The Present Situation of the Baptist Church in Romania*, addressed to the Baptist Union, in which he traced the development of state and church relationships over the previous twenty years. He claimed that the state had interfered in church affairs and was imposing its will on pastors and churches through unwritten directives which the denominational leaders were being forced to carry out. He stated that this was illegal and also infringed the Lordship of Christ in his Church.

The authorities immediately confiscated the paper and dismissed him from his teaching post in the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest and took him in for interrogation. They tried to isolate him and prove that he was not representing the views of

others in the denomination. The leaders of the Baptist Union helped them in this. The General Secretary of the Union, together with other leaders, visited one of the area associations and got them to state officially that Josef Tson was a trouble-maker who was peddling Western ideas and who was to be ejected from the denomination.

Vasile Talos visited the General Secretary in his office and said that there were at least four pastors who supported Tson and there were probably many others. He was told in reply that he was blind and was making an idol of Tson. He and his friends did not represent the real views of the Union. Talos then had the bold idea of writing a letter of support for Josef directly to President Ceausescu and collecting signatures in support. They drew up a document in support of his paper, visited other pastors around the country and obtained a further forty-six signatures of those who supported Josef Tson's stand. They urged all who signed to fast and pray for the success of their efforts. When they received the first refusal, they decided to send the letter immediately, even though they had not visited the complete number of pastors. They felt that the man who refused was probably an informer and that their plan would soon be obstructed by the *Securitate* if they delayed.

Josef sent a copy of his paper to Keston College in England, who translated and published it and sent copies to a number of US senators and congressmen in Washington. In the providence of God, the arrival of the book coincided with the arrival in Washington of President Ceausescu who was seeking to negotiate the 'Most Favoured Nation' agreement between his country and the USA! The American politicians insisted to the Romanian President that they would only vote for the agreement between their countries if the abuses mentioned in Tson's paper were put right first. Ceausescu had no real alternative and so reluctantly agreed.

When he returned to his country, he seems to have immediately issued orders for at least some of the abuses mentioned by Josef Tson and the fifty signatories to be corrected. Officials from the Department of Cults called in Tson and some of the other Baptist leaders and asked them what concessions they were wanting. They requested, among other things, that there should be freedom for the Church to hold meetings for worship, evangelism, Bible study and other activities, and that the restrictions on baptisms and the elections of church officers should be lifted.⁶ They also asked that the preaching licences of a number of pastors should be restored. One of these was a man from the western town of Timisoara whose licence had been taken away three years before. His name was Liviu Olah.

The Revival Begins

Liviu Olah had qualified as a lawyer before training as a pastor. He was already a very gifted preacher and to be excluded from the pulpit was extremely painful for him. During the three years when he had been debarred from preaching, he had spent much time in prayer and fasting. God was preparing him for his future work.

When Josef Tson and the other Baptist leaders met with the officials from the Department of Cults, the Baptist President Nicolae Kovacs agreed to let Liviu Olah become his assistant in the church in Oradea where he was pastor. Kovacs was often away on denominational business in Bucharest, over 600 kilometres away. He had also recently suffered a heart attack and the church was urging him to appoint a second pastor. Liviu Olah became assistant pastor in the 2nd Baptist Church in Oradea in January 1974.

Almost as soon as Liviu Olah started preaching in Oradea, things began to happen! God had quite obviously anointed him with his Spirit in a very special way. He preached very powerfully on the judgment of God on sin and the hell that awaits unrepentant sinners. He always began his sermons very quietly without any attempt at histrionics but five minutes after he had started preaching, people were in tears and under strong conviction of sin, crying out for God's mercy and forgiveness. Eyewitnesses speak of 'divine power floating in the air'; everyone in the congregation was touched, the whole church seemed to be in tears, non-Christians were praying aloud for mercy and forgiveness. People came burdened with their sins, but as they responded they were filled with joy and left the church feeling that they were flying, not walking, according to one witness, who says that unbelievers who came usually responded on either the first or the second visit. There was a renewal and transformation of the church with 99% of the members changed, according to contemporary observers.

Liviu Olah used every opportunity to preach the gospel, including weddings and funerals, where large numbers of outsiders who would not normally attend a Baptist church were present. Very soon, large numbers were being converted and asking to be baptised. This was at a time when it was still uncertain what would happen to both preacher and those baptised if the rigid rules governing baptism were broken.

By June over 100 had been baptised. In the next six months a further 249 were baptised, 149 in a single service which took place on the first Sunday in December. These were almost entirely outsiders who had come to faith as a result of Liviu Olah's preaching. By the end of the year, a total of 356 had confessed their new-found faith in Christ in this way. The membership of the church had grown in twelve months from around 550 to over 1000!

1974 was a momentous year. The church in Oradea grew by leaps and bounds. News of what was happening there began to spread to other churches and soon similar things began to happen elsewhere. Josef Tson and other pastors continued their courageous protests about state interference in the life of the churches and also went on the offensive in showing the moral bankruptcy of Communism – and suffered for it. All these things attracted the attention of ordinary people, who began to venture into the churches to see what all the fuss was about!

Liviu Olah's powerful preaching was backed up by prayer – his own prayer-life and also his insistence on prayer in the life of the church. The new, comparative, freedom meant that meetings could now also be held on Friday and Sunday evenings. Liviu Olah encouraged the members at Oradea to use this new-found freedom by making the weekly church prayer meeting the very heart of the church's life, and put great stress on the need for intercessory prayer. He also urged the believers to form prayer groups in homes in different parts of the town – something almost unheard of at the time!

He told the people to draw up lists of relatives, friends and workmates, and encouraged them to be very specific in praying for these people to be converted. He even suggested that they include the names of the local mayor and other Communist officials on their prayer lists! On one occasion a visitor asked Liviu Olah the 'secret' of the Revival. Olah turned to a child of eleven nearby and asked, 'How many people are on your daily prayer list?' The child replied, 'Eighty-six.' 'There is your answer! That is the reason for the Revival,' said Olah.

The two classical 'ingredients' of revival, prayer and powerful preaching, were at the very centre of the new movement of spiritual awakening. A third classical emphasis in revival also featured in Liviu Olah's message, what he called 'the repentance of the Repenters' – the need for radical holiness.

Liviu Olah emphasised that a holy God whose judgment is revealed against the sinfulness of unbelievers is also displeased with the sin and compromise in the lives of his people. He urged Christians to make a clean break with every known sin in their lives as individuals. But he went further and called on the Oradea church as a whole to make a stand on the need for absolute holiness.

As mentioned earlier Bulgaria continues to experience revival and there are hopeful signs of awakening in other parts of Eastern Europe and especially in the CIS. This must surely foster in us a great desire for the advance of the gospel in these nations and to the ends of the earth.

Dr Ron Davies is a tutor at All Nations Bible College, Ware, Herts. He is author of I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT, Monarch 1992, pp288. This book provides a well-documented survey of revivals.

Footnotes

- 1 In April 1992 the head of the present *Securitate* (reformed, but still in existence) told the Romanian Parliament that he had over 400,000 files of former *Securitate* informers. These were people who were officially enlisted as informers in the pay of the *Securitate*. The present membership of the *Securitate* and the number of informers is unknown.
- 2 Karl Marx viewed religion as 'the opium of the people' which would wither away of its own accord under Communism. Lenin was violently opposed to Christianity because his brother had been executed by the Russian authorities with the Church's blessing. The Marxist-Leninist synthesis was to hasten the demise of religion in general and Christianity in particular because it diverted people's attention from the pursuit of the socialist ideal. In addition, the

Church was seen as an alternative authority source which was a potential threat to the totalitarian claims of the socialist state. This last point became particularly relevant in the last decades of Communist rule in the USSR and Eastern Europe as the spiritual and moral bankruptcy of the state ideology became obvious to everyone. Nowhere was this more evident than in Romania.

- 3 It seems that in the late 1950s and early 1960s there was a movement of genuine revival among the Hungarian speaking churches in Romania (there are about two million ethnic Hungarians in Romania). The movement took place in both the Hungarian Baptist churches and the Hungarian Reformed Church. In the Baptist churches, the state authorities used the compliant Romanian leaders of the Baptist Union to crush the movement (since the toppling of Nicolae Ceausescu the Hungarian Baptists have formed their own Union). In the Hungarian Reformed Church the spiritual awakening was channelled through the Christian Endeavour movement, which continues to be a source of renewal within the Reformed Church and works in a number of areas in the Church's life.
- 4 The main Christian church groups in Romania are the Romanian Orthodox Church (which contains a renewal movement, 'The Lord's Army' numbering around 500,000), the Eastern Rite Catholic Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Hungarian Reformed Church (exclusively among the ethnic Hungarian minority), the Lutheran Church (mainly among the German minority), the Baptist Church, the Pentecostal Church, the Brethren and the Seventh Day Adventists.
- 5 *Religion in Communist Lands* vol 2 nos 4 & 5 (Oct 1974) pp36-37 contains a letter from a graduate of the Baptist Seminary who subsequently enrolled in the Philosophy Faculty at Bucharest University. Because he openly declared his faith in God when he was asked, he was expelled from the University by the Rector's office and no amount of subsequent protests were able to secure a reversal of the decision.
- 6 Baptists from outside Romania, as well as the official leadership of the denomination, were also making representations to the government for some of the restrictions to be lifted. However, it seems that the demands of the US senators really made the difference.

**THE CAREY CONFERENCE FOR MINISTERS –
The Grace of Law**

The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire, 5-7 January 1994

Visiting speaker: Robert Godfrey, President of Westminster Seminary, California

Subjects:

Martin Luther – The Law & the Gospel	Robert Godfrey
John Calvin & the Pentateuch – Moral, Civil & Ceremonial Law	Robert Godfrey
The Ordination of Women	Robert Godfrey
The True Bounds of Christian Freedom	Geoff Thomas
The Law & Gospel Preaching	Peter Jeffrey
The Law & Holiness	Bob Sheehan
The NT Use of the Law	Erroll Hulse
Maintaining Discipline in the Churches	To be announced

Application to: John Rubens, 22 Leith Road, Darlington, Co Durham DL3 8BQ

Evangelism – Yesterday & Today

An interview with Evangelist R F Gates, who co-pastors at Heritage Baptist Church, Shreveport, Louisiana, USA, with Pastor Bill Ascol.

Can you tell us something of your upbringing and background?

RFG – I was born in Jonesboro, Louisiana on September 17, 1932 and took up residence in Shreveport at a very early age. My parents were ‘nominal Christians’ but I was not educated in the gospel truths either at home or in the church. However, after I was afflicted with severe diabetes which nearly resulted in my death, my family returned to the church. Sad to say it was a church that failed to proclaim the true saving message of the gospel. As a result, I joined the church apart from an authentic work of quickening grace in my soul. I came to the front of the church but not to Jesus Christ and for six years I nurtured a spurious hope that I was a child of God.

How did you come to Christ?

RFG – The God of all grace was pleased to bring me savingly to himself during a Billy Graham crusade conducted in Shreveport in April, 1951. After attending several of the meetings I was brought to deep conviction by the Spirit and was made to see my grievous sin before the holy God. I did not ‘go forward to make a decision’ during the ‘invitation time’ but was made alive in Christ and cast myself upon him for salvation as I sat in my seat. I left the stadium that evening never again to be the same for surely ‘the old has gone, the new has come!’

When were you called to the ministry?

RFG – God’s call came to me while I was



Evangelist R F Gates

in college preparing for a profession in public accounting. I was under abiding and strong impressions to preach and teach his Word but could not see how I could carry out such a great work. However after weeks of inner struggle I bowed fearfully to his will and began preparation for the gospel ministry.

When did you begin as an itinerant evangelist?

RFG – After finishing Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1959, I took a pastorate in the state of Oklahoma. From the initiation of my ministry there I had a heart longing to reach men for Christ and as time progressed the desire became ever stronger to go into ‘the fields... ripe to harvest’ and calls came to me to do just that. Finally, in 1965 I resigned my pastorate and entered the labour of itinerant evangelism.

What was your theological position when you began?

RFG – At the beginning of my evangelistic efforts my theological stance was not well established. Although I was convinced that the Scriptures taught the

ultimate sovereignty of God in all things including the salvation of sinners, I had yet to come to any systematised understanding of the grand sweep of that doctrinal truth. I also had difficulty working through the practical implications of a God-centred evangelism.

How did you come to the Reformed faith, and what books were helpful in your pilgrimage?

RFG – The manner of my own conversion brought me from the start of my Christian life to the awareness that ‘salvation comes from the Lord’. All I had to do was to study the ways of the Lord with me – the means he used to bring me to the Graham meetings, the strong effects the preached Word had upon me, the powerful conviction of sin that seized me and drew me unto the Saviour – and I realised that God had done it all. Early on a few sound books such as Lorraine Boettner’s *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* and Arthur Pink’s *The Sovereignty of God* were put into my hands. After much searching, prayer and study my heavenly Father firmly set my feet upon the doctrinal path of our historical Baptist fathers of the faith. Like Luther I can say, ‘Here I stand, I can do no other.’

How did this affect your ministry?

RFG – I was trained in and under the prevailing influence of the methodology of mid-twentieth-century evangelism. That was all I knew and as the Lord graciously revealed the truth of his sovereign saving work to me, I was perplexed as to how this should be practised in church and personal evangelism. In working through this I received much help from J I Packer’s book, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*. Conversations with a few fellow pastors who were strong in the Reformation truths were also helpful. As the reality of both

divine sovereignty and the use of means gripped me, my evangelistic efforts changed. With new confidence in Christ’s sufficiency and the certainty that it was God and God alone who could and would raise the spiritually dead of his choosing, I began truly to trust him for the harvest. No longer was it a matter of pressuring for a decision. Now it was evangelising, pressing the claims of Jesus and resting in him for true fruit. As the years have come and gone, I thank him daily for his grace and the experiential knowledge that ‘salvation comes from the Lord’ alone.

With a lifetime of experience what changes have you seen in the general climate in the churches you visit?

RFG – Over the past twenty-seven years as an itinerant evangelist I have seen many changes in the spiritual climate of the churches where I have laboured. First, the sense of sin’s vileness and seriousness has sadly lessened among both pew and pulpit. Few indeed are the churches today which practise scriptural church discipline. Second, the concept of salvation has become very shallow so that I greatly fear the majority of churches are being filled with ‘pagan saved’. On the other hand I rejoice to report that scores of churches I have visited in the past ten years are coming to a practical understanding of evangelical Calvinism. Also countless pastors are looking at the baptism statistics in their churches and asking themselves, ‘What has gone wrong with our evangelism?’ I am much encouraged over what I see happening in many of our Southern Baptist congregations today.

How much real evangelism, apart from the special meetings, goes on in the churches?

RFG – As a whole, little God-centred evangelism seems to be ongoing in our churches today outside of the usual evan-

gelistic meetings conducted from time to time. Door to door witnessing and distribution of the Scriptures are ministries found in exceedingly few of the churches where I have gone. We seem to have lost the 'Whitefieldian' urgency of going into all the world and making disciples of all men. I thank the Father for occasional exceptions. May they increase and may we all be awakened to fresh zeal for souls and for his glory in this lazy age.

What is your present situation with regard to assisting the new church in Shreveport?

RFG – I am serving as an elder with Pastor Bill Ascol in the Heritage Baptist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana. When I am in town, I assist brother Ascol in the various pastoral duties and I teach the adult Sunday School class. It is also my responsibility to keep church and personal evangelism ever before our people and to lead in weekly evangelistic outreach. This is my first occasion to serve in a joint pastoral situation and it has been of immense value to me personally. I believe that the church family has also benefited.

Can you tell us something about this new church?

RFG – The Heritage Baptist Church is about one and a half years old. It began with ten families meeting in various homes. In July 1992, Pastor Bill Ascol and his family came from Clinton, Louisiana to our little group and his pastorate with us has been owned of God in every way. We currently have about 32 members with between 100 to 125 in weekly attendance. We are a Southern Baptist congregation holding, by conviction, to the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith. Recently we were given an entire church complex (debt free, no less!) by a

dissolved Baptist church. We are located in a neighborhood of great spiritual need in a metropolitan area of some 300,000 souls. Our location as well as our very ecclesiastical existence are both miracles of God's sovereign grace and perfect providence. To God be the glory, great things he has done and is doing!

What is your hope for the future of the Southern Baptist Convention?

RFG – I have a strong conviction that a fresh wind is blowing across the SBC in these hours and that, should the Lord tarry for a season, we shall live to see an amazing work of God in our midst. Mercifully the Lord of glory is raising up an army of young pastors in the Convention who are returning to the 'old paths' of such Southern Baptist fathers of the faith as R B C Howell, Richard Fuller, James P Boyce, John L Dagg, Basil Manly, P H Mell, B H Carroll, John A Broadus, J B Tidwell, J B Gambrell and others too many to name. Added to these changes are taking place among the up-and-coming leadership in the Convention. For example, the new president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky (our oldest SBC seminary) is an unapologetic believer in the doctrines of grace. Also several of the most eminent young scholars and teachers who are providing classroom instruction to hundreds of Southern Baptist theological students are proponents of Reformation truth. Time fails me to speak of the ever-growing influence of the Southern Baptist Founders Conference together with the attendant message of The Founders Journal periodical. In short, I rejoice in what I am observing: a cloud the size of a man's hand moving toward us. Oh, may the Lord be pleased soon to send heavy showers upon us.



The old men at Vulkanesti, Moldova, cleared the snow in temperatures of -18° so that their young men could study the Word.

Moldova

The **Slavic Gospel Association** arranged three teaching programmes during 1993 in main locations in Moldova. Seminars were conducted by church leaders from Britain covering vital subjects chosen to equip untrained pastors to lead and teach village congregations.

In March, Pastor Winston Flavell of Spring Meadow Baptist Chapel, Warley, West Midlands, was one of the tutors. He reports that 'Moldova is a very poor country but so values its independence after the Communist régime as to refuse to sign the CIS treaty. However being dependent on the CIS for oil and other vital supplies

they are being pressurised to sign. Since Communist rule was removed, a type of lawlessness has overtaken society. There are few cars on the streets and in the cities it is unsafe to park a car except in floodlit compounds with a security guard. Although vineyards abound, we were told that only 65% are harvested due to lack of machinery and facility to preserve the grapes at required temperatures.

There is a lot of blackmarketeing as currency loses its value while you hold it in your hand. An equivalent month's wage would be £5! People are forced to sell personal belongings to buy bread.

As sad as this picture is materially, so bright is the spiritual one. Those who are Christians have counted the cost and have dared to stand for Christ under the most difficult circumstances. One of the deacons in the northern church in Balti was converted while in the Russian army. When he refused to 'inform' against the pastors of his church he was put out of the army with no pay and had to use his old army pistol to kill rabbits to feed his young family.

The group we were with has planted over 100 churches in a year. We were also asked to preach in village churches during the week and in larger churches on Sundays. It is quite an experience for a British pastor to preach to congregations of 2000 to 3000! There is no frivolity in these churches – it is serious and means a lot. Standing to pray and hear the Word read keeps you on your toes!

They have less need than we do for instruction on evangelism! The Balti church has built new Sunday-school accommodation for 500 children with a basement where the church ladies sew garments to sell to raise funds for gospel work.

With the restrictions on religion lifted there is a gap to be filled. There is a tendency for Moldovans to think that everything from the West is good. We need to pray that the Lord will give his people discernment to sift the wheat from the chaff when it comes to input from abroad.'



*Seminar in progress in Chishinau,
Moldova*

Singapore

On September 15, The Evangelical Library, London, set up a branch in the heart of Singapore, at 289 River Valley Road. Appropriately named *TELOS*, (a Greek word meaning 'purpose' or 'target') this could also stand for *The Evangelical Library of Singapore*. *TELOS* is a non-profit organisation and is designed to give Christians easy access to as many good books, tapes and other materials as possible.

With a small beginning of about 5000 books and tapes, as well as periodicals, the organisers greatly desire to increase this and invite other Christians to join as members and if possible to sponsor the work under the *Friends of Telos* scheme. Details are available from: Telos Book Centre, Serangoon Gardens, PO Box 426, Singapore 9155.

Operation World You Can Change The World

OM Publishing, Box 300, Carlisle,
Cumbria, CA3 0QS, UK.

Operation World, pp663, £8.99 pbk,
£17.99 hardback.

You Can Change the World, pp125
£8.99 full colour large hardback.

Now available, the first book, by Patrick Johnstone, is a complete update of what has already become a daily prayer guide for many. The second is a 'Children's Operation World' by his late wife Jill. Both carry the subtitle, *Pray for the World*. They were born out of prayer. In 1964 the leader of a small mission in South Africa, remembering Andrew Murray's vision for prayer, asked a young missionary in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) to compile a little book of prayer needs for 24 countries so that ordinary people in Africa could *pray*

for the world. Editions in the present form came in 1974, 1978/80, 1985 and now 1993. In all his labours Patrick Johnstone was ably assisted by Jill. Her own burden for the children of the world had begun in her childhood. She completed the text of *You Can Change the World* just weeks before she died from cancer. During her illness one of her great joys was leading an *Operation World* club for children. They loved the material she was preparing – we suspect it will be of equal help to parents and children.

Also available is an *Operation World Map* at £3.99. It gives up-to-date information on recent changes. States and national capitals are indicated as well as major communication routes and Standard Zone time. The 800 mm x 1250 mm map is a high quality colourful product which will assist in praying for the world.



Editor
Associate Editors

ERROLL HULSE, 75 Woodhill Road, Leeds LS16 7BZ
DAVID KINGDON, UK, JIM VAN ZYL, SA
TOM NETTLES, USA, JOHN CAMPBELL, AUSTRALIA
DON GARLINGTON, CANADA

Rates
1 year £8.50 – 2 years £15.00

1 year £8.50 – 2 years £15.00

1 year \$14.00 – 2 years \$22.00

1 year \$20.00 – 2 years \$32.00

1 year \$15.00 – 2 years \$24.00

1 year \$13.00 – 2 years \$22.00

1 year \$15.00 – 2 years \$24.00

1 year R20.00 – 2 years R32.00

1 year \$20.00 – 2 years \$32.00
*Please make cheque payable
to Peter Ong*

Subscriptions
UK & EUROPE

IRISH REPUBLIC

AUSTRALIA

NEW ZEALAND

USA

BRAZIL (USA \$)

CANADA

SOUTH AFRICA

SINGAPORE
AND MALAYSIA
(Singa \$)

Agents

Lyn Hulse
75 Woodhill Road, Leeds LS16 7BZ, UK.

Matthew Brennan
116 Willow Heights, CLONMEL,
Co Tipperary

Ray Levick
27 Coven Avenue, Bayswater North,
Victoria 3153.

Sovereign Grace Books
P.O. Box 62-159, Sylvia Park,
Auckland 60

Great Christian Books Inc.
229 South Bridge Street,
Box 8000, ELKTON, MD 21922.

Tom Lutz
Edgewood Baptist Church,
3743 Nichol Avenue,
Anderson, IN 46011.

Bill Ascol
457 Mohican Lane, Shreveport,
LA 71106

Richard Denham
CP81, CEP 12201,
São José dos Campos, SP.

Max Latchford
6020 154A Street, Surrey, B.C.,
V3S 7H6.

Jim Holmes
PO Box 1681, Northcliff 2115.

Peter Ong
Serangoon Garden, PO Box 426,
Singapore 9155

Single copies one-sixth the above in each case which includes postage.

For airmail add £4.50 sterling equivalent p.a.

Gifts are welcomed and those who wish to support the Magazine should make out their cheques to "Reformation Today".

"Reformation Today" is registered as a charity no. 1017000

Bound volumes available: 71-90 £18 or \$30, 91-110 and 111-130 each £22 or \$35,
post free

cut here

Please send to:

Name:

Address:

Reformation
Today

Bound

Volume

1 year	
2 years	

71-90	
91-110	

I enclose Your name and address:

Please enclose gift card Yes/No

Please send me a receipt Yes/No

CONTENTS

- 1 Editorial**
- 3 Calvin, Trent and Justification** W Robert Godfrey
- 11 The Evangelistic Preaching
of Dr D Martyn Lloyd-Jones** Cary Kimbrell
- 19 The Beginning of the Revival in Romania** Ron Davies
- 27 Evangelism - Yesterday & Today**
- Interview with Evangelist R F Gates Editor
- 30 News**